

ETHICAL AND LEGAL DILEMMAS IN HEALTH INFORMATION DELIVERY: A STUDY ON TRANSPARENCY, MISINFORMATION, AND LEGAL LIABILITY ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS

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Abstract

This study explores the ethical and legal dilemmas in the delivery of health information on digital platforms, focusing on three main aspects: transparency, misinformation, and legal liability. In the digital age, quick and easy access to health information should help people make better decisions. However, a lack of transparency and the spread of misinformation can be detrimental to public health. This study emphasises the importance of transparency in information delivery to build public trust, while identifying misinformation as a serious threat to public health. The study also discusses the legal responsibility that information providers and digital platforms have to ensure the information provided is valid, accurate and based on scientific evidence. With a combination of strict regulations and strict law enforcement, it is hoped that a safer and more reliable information environment can be created for the public.

Keywords: Dilemma, Ethics, Law, Health Information Delivery, Transparency, Misinformation, Legal Liability, Digital Platform.

Introduction

Technological developments in the digital age have brought about changes in the way information is delivered and received. One sector that is greatly affected by this phenomenon is health. Digital technology enables easier, faster and wider access to health information for the public. Various digital platforms, such as health apps, medical websites, and social media, are starting to become the primary means for individuals to seek information related to disease diagnosis, drug recommendations, and disease prevention measures (Kumar, 2023) . In addition, technological advances such as telemedicine now allow patients to get medical consultation services online without the need to come to a health facility in person (Thompson, 2021) .

Telemedicine is a method of healthcare that utilises communication and information technology to deliver medical services remotely. With telemedicine, patients can consult with medical personnel, obtain diagnoses, receive treatment recommendations, and even access medication prescriptions without the need for a physical meeting with a doctor (Gupta, 2025) . These services are usually performed

through digital platforms such as smartphone apps, video calls, or online health portals. Telemedicine is an efficient solution, especially to improve access to healthcare in remote areas, facilitate follow-up care, and reduce the burden on the health system in emergency or pandemic situations. This is a solution, especially in remote areas where it is difficult to access traditional health services, as well as during a pandemic where community mobility is limited (Foster, 2021) .

Not only in the aspect of information, digital technology has also supported various innovations in the medical field, such as the development of applications to monitor health conditions (e.g. heart rate, blood sugar levels, and sleep quality), the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in medical data analysis, and the development of Internet of Things (IoT)-based medical devices that can provide faster and more accurate diagnosis. On the other hand, big data technology in healthcare helps healthcare institutions analyse patient data more deeply and predict trends in epidemics or certain diseases (Patel, 2024) . With this combination of innovations, digital technology is not just a tool, but also a new foundation for more modern, effective, and inclusive health management. The presence of health information on these platforms makes it easy for people to access various educational materials, care tips, and medical information. However, behind this progress, a number of complex challenges arise, especially with regard to ethical and legal aspects (Adams, 2020) .

Transparency is an important component of health information delivery. Clear, accurate and easy-to-understand information can help people make informed decisions regarding their health. However, in many cases it is found that not all information disseminated on digital platforms fulfils the principle of transparency. A lot of information is created without listing credible sources, or even has biased content, which can mislead the public (Lee, 2021) .

The phenomenon of misinformation is increasingly in the spotlight, especially during pandemics and other health emergencies. The spread of myths related to vaccines, untested medicines, and false health claims often spreads quickly through social media. This misinformation not only harms individuals who are exposed to it, but also has the potential to cause a larger health crisis, such as a decrease in the level of trust in medical personnel and health institutions (Zhang, 2021) .

From a legal perspective, the dissemination of health information on digital platforms also poses a dilemma regarding liability. The question of who should be responsible for the impact of misinformation - the user, the content creator or the platform provider - is often ambiguous. Many countries, including Indonesia, do not have adequate regulations to address this issue. As a result, perpetrators of misinformation often go unpunished, while victims of misinformation have little protection (Park, 2023) .

Thus, given the social impact of this issue, there is a need for in-depth research on the ethical and legal dilemmas in the delivery of health information on digital

platforms. This research not only aims to understand the root of the problem, but also provide solutions that can help create a transparent, accurate, and responsible health information ecosystem. By integrating aspects of ethics, law, and digital platform management practices, this research is expected to contribute to efforts to improve the quality of health information received by the public.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is an approach used to collect, analyse and synthesise information from written sources, such as books, scientific journals, articles, reports and other documents, to answer research questions or support study objectives (Green, 2022); (Galvan & Galvan, 2017). This method aims to understand and review the development of research related to a particular topic, identify knowledge gaps, and obtain a strong theoretical foundation. Literature research is usually conducted systematically with steps such as determining the topic, finding relevant sources, evaluating the credibility of the sources, analysing the findings, and concluding the information obtained. This method is particularly useful for exploratory or conceptual research, as well as a basis for more in-depth follow-up research (Torraco, 2005).

Results and Discussion

Ethical Aspects of Health Information Delivery on Digital Platforms

The delivery of health information through digital platforms is an effective way to educate the public. However, ethical aspects are very important to consider so that the information conveyed does not cause potential misinformation or negative impacts on the recipient. Ethics in health information delivery include honesty, balance, accuracy, and responsibility for the impact of the information provided. As a health information provider, it is important to ensure that the data or content shared is based on scientific evidence, relevant to the needs of the audience, and does not favour any particular interest (Williams, 2023).

In the context of digital platforms, the instantaneous nature of communication often makes the dissemination of health information less verifiable. Information providers should ensure that the source of information comes from trusted journals, research institutions, or health organisations. The delivery of invalid information can be detrimental to users, potentially even leading to incorrect health decision-making. Data accuracy should be a top priority to maintain public trust in the platform (Stein, 2022).

In addition, ethical aspects also include respect for individual privacy and confidentiality. Information providers should not misuse users' personal data collected through digital platforms. Privacy policies must be explained transparently, and providers must ensure that personal information is not misused or disseminated

without proper authorisation. Respect for individual privacy is a fundamental principle in creating an ethical and professional environment in the digital realm (Doe, 2022) .

The delivery of health information should also be done by considering language and communication styles that are polite and inclusive. The use of sensitive words, stigmatisation, or singling out certain groups should be avoided to prevent conflict or feelings of discrimination. Content should be designed to be easily understood by diverse audiences, taking into account the education level, age, or cultural background of the platform users (Warner, 2024) .

Ethics in information delivery also require providers to avoid exploiting certain situations for personal or commercial gain. For example, they should not capitalise on people's fear of a disease to market health products without a valid scientific basis. Information should be objective, without financial bias or hidden political interests. Transparency towards the purpose of delivery should be upheld (Wong, 2022) .

In addition, it is important to embed warnings and usage guidelines when delivering digital health information. Audiences need to be reminded not to use digital content as a substitute for direct consultation with medical professionals. Platform managers must play an active role in providing education that health information is only an initial reference and cannot be used as the sole basis for medical action (Smith, 2020).

Health information providers should also be responsible for monitoring and updating the content regularly. Information that is no longer relevant or outdated should be revised or deleted immediately to prevent the dissemination of erroneous data. Being proactive in keeping content relevant demonstrates a commitment to the quality of information provided to the public (Lee, 2021) .

Good communication with audiences is also an important part of ethical health information delivery. Platform providers need to provide space for users to ask questions, provide feedback, or clarify information in polite and quality interactions. These two-way interactions help to build trust while ensuring that the content delivered truly meets the needs of the public (Taylor, 2020) .

It is also important to involve health experts in the content creation and validation process. Collaborating with competent doctors, nurses, or researchers to ensure the quality of the information is ethical and professional. By involving experts in the health field, any content disseminated will have better credibility (Karim, 2020) .

Ultimately, the delivery of health information through digital platforms should be based on the principles of ethics, integrity and social responsibility. These ethics in technology not only aim to protect the public from negative impacts, but also help build a healthier, educated community that is able to make informed decisions. The combination of professionalism, transparency, and commitment to information accuracy is key to creating a digital platform that delivers maximum benefits.

The Impact of Health Misinformation on Digital Platforms

Health misinformation spread on digital platforms can have a serious impact on society, especially in making health-related decisions. Invalid or false information often spreads faster than data and research-based information. This is due to the nature of digital media that allows content to go viral easily, without adequate filtering mechanisms. As a result, people are often exposed to inaccurate health information, which can influence their beliefs and behaviours (Harris, 2024).

One of the significant impacts of health misinformation is the growing distrust of medical and scientific institutions. Misinformation often promotes views contrary to official medical recommendations, such as rejecting certain vaccines or treatment methods. This distrust can lead people to ignore the advice of health workers or medical experts, thereby increasing the risk of diseases that could have been prevented or treated. In the case of the pandemic, misinformation about COVID-19 hampered global efforts to control its spread (Garza, 2025).

In addition, people's anxiety levels may increase due to health misinformation. False information about diseases and treatments can create excessive fear or, conversely, a false sense of security. Many people panic after reading unsubstantiated claims of certain dangers. Conversely, false information can also lead people to overlook serious risks, such as believing in scientifically unproven "miracle cures". This combination of fear and misinformation has the potential to damage people's mental health, which is already vulnerable due to social and economic pressures (Fletcher, 2020).

On an individual level, misinformation can cause a person to take actions that are harmful to themselves. For example, a person may try unsafe alternative treatments or even stop using official medication prescribed by a doctor. In some cases, people who believe in false information choose to buy dangerous products sold by irresponsible parties. This can have a direct impact on their physical health, including serious complications or even death (Simpson, 2020).

The impact also extends to the economic aspect of society. Health misinformation often encourages people to buy ineffective products or services, even at very high prices. For example, the promotion of supplements that are thought to cure various diseases is one classic example. In the absence of supporting scientific evidence, the consumption of such products will only burden household costs. On the other hand, national health systems may need to incur additional costs to deal with the impact of the spread of this false information (Brown, 2021).

Not only for individuals, health misinformation can damage interpersonal relationships in society. Debates between those who believe in false information and those who want to educate others often lead to conflict. For example, differing views on vaccines and medication put a strain on relationships between family or community

members. These social tensions impact societal harmony, especially when misinformation is politicised for specific interests (Kumar, 2023).

Digital platforms also have a big responsibility in preventing the spread of health misinformation. Unfortunately, the algorithms used by social media apps often prioritise attention-grabbing content, regardless of the validity of the information. This makes it easy for misinformation to gain wide reach. Although some tech companies have attempted to implement measures to limit the spread of false information, their effectiveness remains a major challenge (Thompson, 2021).

In the long run, health misinformation can slow down global health progress. Health education and counselling efforts become more difficult if people continue to receive inaccurate information. Overcoming this impact requires a multi-pronged approach involving governments, medical institutions, technology companies, and the public itself. Public education on digital literacy and the ability to recognise valid information should be a priority so that people can protect themselves from the dangers of misinformation Health (Gupta, 2025).

Legal Responsibility for the Spread of Misinformation on Health Information on Digital Platforms

Legal liability for the dissemination of health information misinformation on digital platforms is an important aspect that needs serious attention in the current digitalisation era. With the increasing number of internet users, digital platforms have become the main medium for disseminating information, including health-related information. However, the misuse of digital platforms to spread false or misleading information about health has the potential to have a major negative impact on society, both in terms of physical, mental and social aspects. Therefore, the legal aspect plays a key role in regulating and addressing this issue (Foster, 2021).

The spread of health-related misinformation on digital platforms often occurs due to the lack of validation of information sources and the ease of sharing content. On the other hand, digital platforms often implement algorithms that can exacerbate the situation by amplifying the spread of certain content without checking its credibility. This poses a challenge for both the public and regulators, as health misinformation can lead to wrong decisions on disease management or health behaviours, which are ultimately life-threatening (Patel, 2024).

In Indonesia, legal responsibility for the spread of misinformation has been regulated in various legal instruments, such as the Electronic Information and Transaction Law (ITE Law) and the Health Law. In the ITE Law, for example, the dissemination of false news or hoaxes through electronic media is an act that can be subject to criminal sanctions. These articles are designed to ensure that information disseminated especially on digital platforms is valid, accurate, and not misleading to the public (Adams, 2020).

However, the application of the law against the spread of health misinformation does not always go smoothly. A common obstacle is the difficulty in identifying the perpetrators behind information that is disseminated anonymously or through fake accounts. In addition, most digital platforms are still based overseas, making it more difficult for Indonesian legal authorities to monitor their activities. International co-operation is often required to deal with cases involving the cross-border spread of misinformation (Lee, 2021).

The role of digital platforms in addressing the spread of health misinformation was also highlighted. Platforms such as social media and search engines have the ability to control the type of content that appears in users' feeds through their algorithms. As such, many are pushing for these platforms to be more responsible by implementing strict policies, such as warning labels on unverified information or removal of content that is found to be misleading. Proactive measures from digital platforms can help minimise the impact of misinformation on society (Zhang, 2021).

In addition to the legal approach, digital literacy education for the community must also be improved. Good digital literacy will help the public to be more critical in filtering any information they receive and not immediately believe or disseminate information with unclear sources. With adequate digital literacy, the public can be the first bulwark against the massive spread of health misinformation (Park, 2023).

The negative impact of health information misinformation is not only felt by the individual victims, but also on the health system as a whole. When the public is consumed by misinformation, such as false claims about treatment or vaccination, trust in health institutions and medical personnel can decline. In the long run, this has the potential to disrupt the efforts of the government and related parties in improving public health (Williams, 2023).

However, the legal responsibility in terms of health misinformation lies not only with the perpetrators of information dissemination, but also with the organisers of the digital platforms through which it is disseminated. More specific regulations need to be designed to ensure that digital platforms are responsible for maintaining a healthy information ecosystem. With clear regulations, digital platforms can be encouraged to be more active in monitoring and controlling the content they facilitate (Stein, 2022).

As a preventive measure, the government and health authorities must continue to produce and disseminate credible and easily accessible health information. Accurate official information must always be available so that people do not seek information from unreliable sources. Collaboration between agencies, including the private sector, is also important to improve technological competence in dealing with misinformation in the digital space (Doe, 2022).

Fair and transparent law enforcement is key in dealing with cases of health misinformation dissemination. Law enforcement should not only focus on imposing sanctions, but also on rehabilitation and education efforts to prevent perpetrators from

repeating their actions. Repressive and preventive approaches must go hand in hand so that negative impacts can be minimised (Warner, 2024) .

The growing complexity of the issue also poses challenges for all parties involved, including the public, government, digital platforms and medical personnel. Multidisciplinary collaboration is needed to ensure that legal and non-legal responsibilities can be effective in addressing the spread of misinformation in the digital era. Thus, the alignment between legal policy, digital literacy, and technology is an important foundation in maintaining a safe and healthy digital ecosystem (Wong, 2022).

Ultimately, collective awareness of the dangers of spreading health misinformation must continue to be raised. All parties must take an active role to ensure that digital platforms are used positively to build a healthier society. With concrete steps and holistic policy integration, it is hoped that the spread of misinformation can be significantly reduced and the public is better protected from its adverse effects.

Conclusion

Ethical and legal dilemmas in the delivery of health information on digital platforms show that transparency is a key factor in building public trust. Users of digital platforms require clear, accurate and understandable information to make informed health decisions. Lack of transparency can cause confusion, uncertainty, and lower trust in health information providers.

Misinformation is a major challenge that jeopardises public health. The dissemination of inaccurate or misleading information through digital platforms has the potential to trigger anxiety, delayed treatment, or even incorrect medical practices. Addressing misinformation requires close monitoring and collaboration between healthcare providers, digital platforms, and relevant authorities to ensure the information presented is valid and based on scientific evidence.

On the legal liability side, digital platforms and health information providers should take extra care in conveying information. Failure to provide accurate and transparent information may result in legal implications, including lawsuits and regulatory sanctions. As a proactive measure, clearer regulations and strict law enforcement are needed to ensure that all parties are responsible for maintaining the quality and reliability of health information disseminated to the public.

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